



10 November 2005

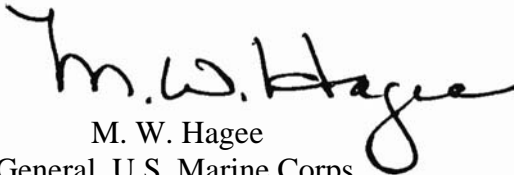
A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

On November 10th, 1775, the Second Continental Congress resolved to raise two battalions of Continental Marines marking the birth of our United States Marine Corps. As Major General Lejeune's message reminds us, the ensuing generations of Marines would come to signify all that is highest in warfighting excellence and military virtue. Each November as Marines the world over celebrate the birth of our Corps, we pay tribute to that long line of "Soldiers of the Sea" and the illustrious legacy they have handed down to us.

This past year has been one of continuous combat operations overseas and distinguished service here at home – a year of challenges that have brought out the very best in our Corps. In Iraq and Afghanistan, Marine courage and mastery of complex and chaotic environments have truly made a difference in the lives of millions. Marine compassion and flexibility provided humanitarian assistance to thousands in the wake of the South East Asian Tsunami, and here at home, Marines with AAVs, helicopters, and sometimes with their bare hands saved hundreds of our own fellow Americans in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Across the full spectrum of operations, you have showcased that Marines *create stability in an unstable world*, and have reinforced our Corps' reputation for setting the standard of excellence.

The sense of honor, courage, and patriotism that epitomized those who answered that first call to arms two hundred and thirty years ago is still indelibly imprinted on our ranks today. In commemorating our anniversary, let us strengthen our ties to the past by paying homage to those who have gone before us. As we honor the sacrifices of our wounded and fallen comrades, our commitment to one another remains unshakable. We take special pride in the actions of the Marines now serving in harm's way, and rededicate ourselves to the service of our Nation and our Corps.

Happy Birthday Marines, Semper Fidelis, and Keep Attacking!


M. W. Hagee
General, U.S. Marine Corps